461 Apart from the material for the making of spears and
462 spear-throwers, and the woven baskets for carrying fire-sticks and other possessions, each man gradually collects, incidentally, as he hunts, the raw materials used for cere-
[237] monial purposes, such as the orange-red breast feathers of the Red-collared Lorikeet[14] and the fur of the Brush-tailed
[431] Opossum (*Trichosurus vulpecula arnhemensis*). Every man thus strives to accumulate articles of value, possessions or *gerri* (see page 5), of the appropriate type, which he will send later to relatives of certain orders within the intricate exchange cycle in which he has a place (pp. 67-68). The need to build up a reserve of *gerri* for use within the exchange cycle supplies still another incentive, or urge, to work, and so to be ready to meet these obligations. A man, therefore, must necessarily spend most of his waking time in working. As a craftsman the aborigine is neat, tidy and efficient, but he follows traditional methods and techniques closely, because they form part of the culture pattern into which he is born, and which is for him a heritage from ancestral times.

● 512 Let us look at the camp of a typical horde of Arnhem Land in the early morning, in order to get some understanding of the way in which these people live, and a picture of the daily routine of hunting and the organisation of work.

[361] The camp is situated generally on high or well-drained ground, and in the dry season is merely a cluster of fires, perhaps with a low breakwind on the windward side, each fire marking the camp of a family, or of a group of single men. In the early south-east season, during the months of

[14] These rich orange-red feathers of the Red-collared Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus rubritorquis*) are used chiefly by clans of *dua* moiety for the ornamentation of the sacred *rärrga*, and are called *tjukurr*, literally "fat".

May, June and July, when the nights are cold, the natives sleep late and the camp is not active until well after daylight. As the people wake, they blow or fan the embers which have been smouldering through the night, and sit around the fire while they prepare for the day's hunting. No regular meal is eaten in the morning, but if any food remains over from the previous night they will warm this on the fire and eat it, before setting out.

About sunrise the camp is in full activity and the people now begin to move off. If each family is hunting as a separate unit the man picks up his spear-thrower and his bundle of spears—chiefly hunting weapons, with a fighting spear or two—and slings over his shoulder a small, closely-woven basket of the type called *bäti mindir*. In this he carries a bundle of firesticks, and odds and ends of half-prepared string (*räkki*) in the form known as *daiyarrk* (bast fibre), together with pieces of beeswax and resin—material used for repairing spears—a knife, or scrapers of shell, a spear head or two, and generally his smoking pipe. If there is a young child, the burden of carrying it is shared by both parents. Very young babies are carried by mothers in elongated bark troughs of the same type as those used for carrying water. These are slung over the left shoulder and supported by the arm, leaving the right arm free to use the digging stick or yam stick. Frequently an older child is carried by the father astride his neck or shoulders, and from time to time the parents change over and relieve one another. Still older children follow behind, or run alongside, sharing the hunting activities of their parents and imitating them in the search for food, learning in this way the technique of hunting and gathering food which they will use throughout their lives.

222 484 Even when they are making for a definite camping ground, aborigines very rarely travel in a straight line. Instead, the journey is made slowly, with deviations to favoured localities which are likely to yield food or game, so that they can hunt as they go. The women and children search for vegetable food as they travel, pausing at intervals to dig yams or other roots, which are put in a "dilly bag" or basket (*bäti*) carried for the purpose. Meanwhile the men are on the lookout for sugar bag (wild honey), opossums, bandicoots (*Isoodon*), native cats (*Dasyurus*), as well as snakes and goannas (*Varanus*) or any other game which they can find. On these journeys nothing comes amiss, and in addition to the quest for food, both men and women pause to gather any materials of use in technological [314] processes, which they may see. The young branches of such [283] trees as *bulgut*, (*Brachychiton paradoxum*), which form an important source of the fibre used for making string, are cut, the bast fibre stripped and tied neatly or rolled up, to be put into their dilly bags for later use. When a "sugar bag" or wild bees' nest is found the honey and even the bee bread is eaten on the spot, unless there is a large [415] amount, when it is carried in a bark trough or a closely [237] woven basket of special type called *timbuka*. The soft black wax is roughly moulded into a ball and carried in this form, to be cleaned and refined later, and used for the mounting of certain spear heads, particularly for *ŋämbi* and *kaiyit* (flint and iron respectively).

[221] 222 512 When the vegetable harvest is at its height, about the middle of the south-east season, and the people are living chiefly on a single staple food which can be harvested readily in one place, the women generally go out in a body. [476] But at such times, although they work close together, there IS NO POOLING OF RESOURCES; EACH COLLECTS 30 FOOD INDEPENDENTLY, WORKING FOR HER OWN FAMILY OR FAMILY GROUP.

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
O117 Murngin O117

is no pooling of resources; each collects food independently, working for her own family or family group. And again, as they travel, the women gather any materials they chance to find which may be of use later, in technology. In this way the people accumulate a reserve of string, fibre, (in various stages of manufacture), resin, bone for making of yam knives and awls, for domestic use, or for canoe and bark trough manufacture, and all the materials regularly used in technology. These are carried in the *bäti*, generally in the form of neat parcels wrapped in *bärrukälla* (*Melaleuca* bark). When the men make a chance visit to an area famed for its spear woods, pigments, or other special material, they gather this and carry it in reserve, for later gift or exchange purposes. Similarly, feathers or down (*rämmän*) of birds are collected, and *bulnyin*, the fur of the Brush-tailed Possum, which is valued also for ceremonial purposes, is stripped before the animal is cooked. The spines (*dimir*) of stingrays are also extracted and all materials useful for technological and ceremonial purposes are removed while an animal is being prepared, wrapped in neat parcels in paperbark and placed in the dilly bag until required for use. As this material is generally carried by the natives in their baskets when they are hunting, they are able to make use of any moments of leisure during a halt, or while food is being cooked, to repair and maintain implements and utensils.

Certain materials, particularly the fat of *kärritjämbäl* the Red Kangaroo, and of a few other animals, and the fat and feathers of some birds, chief of which are the Emu, Plain Turkey or Bustard, the Jabiru and Native Companion, which are difficult to approach, have a high "social value" and are greatly prized. These materials have a ritual sig-

237 nificance and *must* be accumulated by the hunter.[15] This
778 fat, as well as the feathers of the birds mentioned above, are known as *tjärnbin* and play an important part in the ceremonies called *kunabibbi* and *ŋulmark*. The long bones, bills and some of the flight feathers of these birds are also accumulated and wrapped with paperbark into neat parcels called *täbarr*.

264 About midday, or at the conclusion of a drive for game
512 or fish, the people look for a suitable place to make a fire and to cook such small game as opossums, bandicoots, native cats, "goanna" or fish, as they may have secured. If they are hungry, some vegetable food may also be cooked, but the principal meal of the day is eaten in the evening
461 after the return to camp. For a couple of hours during the
512 heat of the day the natives rest. But they are rarely idle; even during these halts the men may often be seen squatting before little fires, making or repairing spears or other weapons. The women also take advantage of such respites to work at the string or mesh baskets which they carry rolled up in a half finished state, just as a white woman may take up knitting or other handiwork in moments of leisure.

[777] [15] Failure to do this would bring "bad luck", a ritual visitation, upon the hunter or on the people. The *tjärnbin*, the name given to the fat and also to certain of the feathers of the mammals and birds which have been mentioned, is believed to carry, in concentrated form, the *marr* or "spiritual power" of the animals. To waste this
[753] *tjärnbin* is to risk a ritual visitation, and if it is held for very long there is a too great concentration of *marr* so that the people will
[751] become sick. To dispel this *marr*, to avert the danger of sickness from it, a ceremony called *kunabibbi* must be held in which the fat and the feathers which are called *tjärnbin* are used and the danger
[777] is averted. It may be noted also that failure to cook game which has been killed, such as the flesh of one of the kangaroos, will bring "bad luck" and impair the *tjämbait*, the prowess or "good luck" of the hunter.

Late in the afternoon, generally about sundown, the people will be seen returning to camp from the day's foraging, the women carrying baskets of food on their heads, rolls of teatree bark (*Melaleuca*) for sleeping mats or for use in cooking, and great loads of firewood. On arriving in camp they light the cooking fires and perhaps make another journey for firewood to carry them through the night, and to bring water from a nearby well or lagoon. If the food to be prepared is of a type which requires much washing during the preparation they may take it close to water to prepare, bringing it back to camp to cook.

Although men do gather some vegetable food, and women also capture small game, besides shellfish, the division of labour is sharply defined and at once evident. The woman is primarily the provider of vegetable food, collectively, *ŋäta*, the getter of wood and water, the maker of light baskets and the smaller and more finely made nets. The man is the hunter, the provider of animal food, and is responsible for the conduct of large scale drives for fish and game. The making of weapons, heavy implements, canoes, canoe paddles, heavy fish traps and baskets of coarse heavy fibre, called *koiyapoi*[10] (fish-for) or *ŋätapoi larr*, (*ŋätapoi*, food-for; *larr*, open or coarse in texture), for the carrying of heavy loads of fish and vegetable food, is also the responsibility of men.

The first impression that any stranger must receive in a fully organised group in Eastern Arnhem Land is of industry. He cannot fail to see that everybody, man or woman, works hard, and that the work is well organised and runs smoothly. And he must also be impressed by the fact that with the exception of very young children who engage earnestly in play, much of which is imitative and

[10] *-poi*, suffix "for".

BASED ON THE ACTIVITIES OF ADULTS, THERE IS NO IDLENESS.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

YULENGOR

484 I was awakened by the trilling of a butcher bird, and as the sun tipped the motionless trees we resumed our journey through dew-laden grass. No food had been saved from the night before and sharp eyes were on the look-out for something to eat, but it was not till about ten o'clock that the women cooeed and a halt was made to cook an opossum and two goannas.

The day was uneventful and at sundown we came to a deep crocodile-infested creek about a quarter of a mile wide. As there were no canoes about, I wondered how the crossing [481] was to be made, but without hesitation several youths waded in and swam over with their spears. This is the way all the men would have crossed, but Jirring suggested that he and I wait with my medical equipment and camera till his wives and children arrived with their food and family possessions. [501] They were prepared for the crossing, and had sheets of paper-bark which they stacked in heaps on the water, driving digging-sticks through each stack to hold them together. Small children and bundles of food were then piled on top, older children clung to the sides, and a woman swam beside each pile as she pushed it to the other side. Medicines, camera, and swag were successfully shipped in the same way. Such crossings, with yelping dogs, shrilling women, and squealing children, apparently scare away hungry crocodiles, for they seldom attack, although on this occasion several glided off the mud into the stream as we approached. At dusk we came to the camp of a Blue Mud Bay horde, some distance from the river.

[797] [164] I spent several days in this camp with Yulengor I had not seen before, and was able to treat wounds and ulcers and give hypodermic injections for yaws and gangosa. By day 484 the men stayed under leafy bough shelters, talking, sleeping, ●512 and preparing totemic emblems with intricate and artistic 462 designs. Women went food-gathering, and at sundown arrived with loads of firewood and dilly-bags bulging with

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

fern-roots, yams, lizards, and shell-fish. Most of the night was spent in singing and dancing. 484 [512] [462]

Sunrise on the fifth morning saw the camp deserted, for nomads invariably take their leave abruptly. The Blue Mud Bay horde was on its way south, and my party soon set out for Yirrkala.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

dark', is illustrated every day in Arnhem Land, for there is no twilight; twenty to thirty minutes after sunset it is too dark to read ordinary newsprint, and within ninety minutes it is as dark as at any time during the night.

Once out of sight in the west the sun abruptly changes her course and travels northwards before going east along a well-worn track below the rim of the horizon. This is her short-cut to the spirit world and her waiting child. When the Junkgowa gave the Yulengor all this information, they also said that if ever men looked on the sun-child they would die, and now it is accepted that the sun was made for the earth, but that her child belongs to the dimly-lit spirit world.

The night is long and tiresome to nomads; they chafe at the sun's tardiness in rising every morning, and they try to console themselves with the knowledge that she is preparing her own totemic food. They say: 'The baby cries often, and asks her not to leave him.' Except in big camps, and during ceremonies, the nomadic family reclines round the fire soon after sunset and usually everyone is asleep by 9 p.m. It is well known that when sleeping in the open one tends to waken early, and allowing the nomad six hours' sleep at night in addition to that obtained during the heat of the day, he will wake before daylight. Some of them are invariably sitting up and talking long before sunrise, and in the early dawn it is a common sight to see families grouped disconsolately round the embers of their night fires, watching and waiting for the sun.

Bunumbirr, the Morning Star, stays with the sun-child to keep him company in the daytime. By sunset the star is awake and makes ready to leave, but as the sun comes home about this time he waits for a time and talks to her as she prepares her food. Bunumbirr's work is to commence the new day, and shortly after midnight he leaves the sun-family and travels slowly earthwards, throwing off the covers of darkness and heralding the sun's coming to waiting